



## **Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office**

### **Progress in Laos as of February 7, 2005**

#### **Current Status of Unaccounted-for Americans Lost in the Vietnam War**

	<u>Vietnam</u>	<u>Laos</u>	<u>Cambodia</u>	<u>China</u>	<u>Total</u>
Original Missing	1,921	569	83	10	2,583
Repatriated and Identified	<u>518</u>	<u>192</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>741</u>
Remaining Missing	1,403	377	55	7	1,842

Of the remaining 377 Americans still unaccounted for in the country of Laos, 41 are in a “no further pursuit” status, meaning that as a result of rigorous investigation we have conclusive evidence the individual perished, but do not believe it possible to recover his remains.

#### **Repatriating and Identifying Remains**

- The Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command normally conducts 5 Joint Field Activities (JFAs) per year in Laos.
- Each JFA involves 50 U.S. personnel plus their Lao counterparts. Together, they work on investigations and excavations throughout the country for a period of approximately 30 days.
- The 87<sup>th</sup> JFA began January 13 and will conclude February 15, 2005. Recovery teams are excavating sites in Savannakhet and Salavan Provinces.
- The 88<sup>th</sup> JFA is scheduled for March 4 – April 6, 2005. Recovery teams are scheduled to excavate sites in Savannakhet, Salavan, and Xekong Provinces.
- American remains are transferred to the Central Identification Lab in Hawaii for positive identification by forensic anthropologists.
- Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Jennings met with senior officials in Laos in June 2004 to discuss ways to increase the pace of recovery operations. There are approximately 75 loss sites that have been located but await excavation.

#### **Resolving “Last Known Alive” Cases**

- Of the original 81 individuals “Last Known Alive” in Laos (those who might have survived their loss incidents, but did not return), DoD has determined the fate of 28, with 53 still unresolved.
- Of the 28 whose fate has been determined, the remains of nine have been located and identified.

#### **Research and Investigations**

- Mr. Jennings reached an archival research arrangement with the Lao during his June 2004 visit that will, for the first time, involve a jointly planned comprehensive effort to locate documents in Lao archives that could contain information regarding Americans missing in Laos during the war.
- The Lao have allowed 40 Vietnamese witnesses to participate in investigating 32 cases in trilateral operations during JFAs in Laos. These witnesses have provided significant information on 14 cases that has led to the excavation of several sites and recoveries associated with as many as 18 individuals.
- The Lao have allowed a Joint Archival Research Team (ART) access to the Lao National Film Archives and Video Center. The ART reviewed a total of 18,463 photographs, with eight depicting U.S. POWs and nine depicting U.S. aircraft wreckage. We have correlated 26 photos to 19 cases, 12 of which correlate to nine unresolved cases. The ART has conducted research at the Revolutionary Museum, Military Museum, the Lao News Agency, the Phokadeuath Hall in Savannakhet Province, the National Library and the National University of Laos, and repositories in the provinces of Champasak, Attapu, Salavan, Xekong, Bolikhamxai, Savannakhet, Houaphan, Khammouan, Louang Phrabang, Vientiane and Xiang Khoang.